

EDUCATIONAL CONTROL POLICY IMPLEMENTATION BY ANAMBRA STATE PRINCIPALS: IMPLICATIONS FOR REPOSITIONING SECONDARY EDUCATION

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Abstract

Repositioning of secondary education requires among other things that principals implement educational policies satisfactorily. The purpose of the study was therefore to investigate how principals implement the educational control policies issued by the Anambra State Education Commission (ANSEC). The survey was based on three research questions. Subjects included all principals in the 259 government-owned urban and rural secondary schools in Anambra state. Data were collected through a 25 item-questionnaire structured a 4 point scale of strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Mean and standard deviation scores were used to provide answers for the research questions, while the t - test was used to test the four null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings of the study shows that principals in urban school implement the control policy on students' admission more than those in rural schools, principals do not implement some of the policy stipulations on fund raising, the policy on engagement of part time teachers is not being fully implemented in secondary schools in both Urban and rural area, and the control policy on in-service education is not being fully implemented by the principals. Some recommendations were suggested on what principals, ANSEC and the government should do to ensure the effective implementations of educational control policies.

Introduction

The repositioning of secondary education is imperative in the achievement of secondary education objectives in Nigeria. In the same way, the implementation of control policies has been described as a very important factor towards repositioning secondary education (Eya, 2002). In Anambra State, the State Education Commission (ANSEC) from the time of its inception has continued to issue a number of control policy circulars to secondary school principals. The policy directives contain information, guidelines and stipulation on the conduct of students' admissions, schools' fund raising, engagement of part-time teachers and in-service training of teachers. By issuing these control policies, the ANSEC hopes to achieve quality standards in the conduct of these affairs, check irregularities and monitor school administration (Idima, 2004).

However, the outcomes of the implementation of these policies have been unsatisfactory. For instance, cases of unauthorized levying of students, haphazard admission of students into secondary schools or from one school to another, engagement of non-qualified part-time teachers, inter-state admission of students without due processes and attendance to in-service programmes during school hours are evident in most secondary schools in both urban and rural areas despite control policies issued against the mentioned practices (Marfo, 2004). Clearly with all these anomalies, it is likely that the control policies of ANSEC are not being satisfactorily implemented in Anambra State secondary schools. Given the fact that the implementation of such control policies rests on the principals, one wonders how the principals effectively implement these policies and yet these anomalies exist. This gives rise to an important question. How do Anambra State principals implement the control policies of Anambra State? This question is the problem that this study addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the actions through which Anambra State principals implement the policy directives on students' admission, fund raising, and engagement of part time teachers issued by the Anambra State Education Commission (ANSEC).

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do principals implement the control policies issued by ANSEC on student's admission in Anambra State?
2. What actions do principals take to implement the control policies on fund raising?
3. How do the principals implement control policy directives regarding the engagement of part time teachers?

Research Design

The research design adopted in this study was descriptive survey. This design is ideal for use in this study because the study involved collecting and describing data regarding the extent of principals' implementation of the control policies of the Anambra State Education Commission.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted in Anambra State in Nigeria. It covered all the six education zones in the state namely: Aguata education zone, Awka education zone, Nnewi education zone, Ogidi education zone, Onitsha education zone and Otuocha education zone.

Population of the Study

The population for this study comprised all the secondary school principals in Anambra State. Data from the State Education Commission (2004) showed that, there are total of 259 principals in the secondary schools. All the members of this population participated in the study.

Instrument for Data Collection

A self-structured questionnaire was used in this study. The instrument entitled "Implementation of Control Policies of ANSEC by Principals (ICPAP). The questionnaire comprised 25 items that were separated into 3 clusters. Cluster I had nine items that were concerned with information on .implementation of the policy on students' admission. Cluster 2 consisted of nine items that were concerned with implementation of the policy on fund raising. Cluster 3, contained seven items that required the respondents to provide information on their actions regarding engagement of part time teachers. The items in the questionnaire were structured on a 4-point scale that ranges from strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

Validity and Reliability of Instruinent

The instrument was face-validated by two experts in Educational Administration and Supervision, and an expert in measurement and evaluation from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The several corrections made by validators were properly effected before the final copies of the questionnaire were produced.

Reliability of the Instrument

The Cronbach Alpha formula was used to estimate the reliability of instruments. This involved administering, copies of the questionnaire on a sample of 10 principals from secondary schools in Enugu State. Their scores of the respondents on the section C of the instrument were subjected to statistical analysis. Coefficient values of 0.78, 0.76, and 0.81 were obtained for clusters 1, 2, and 3 respectively. These coefficient values were considered adequate for the study.

Method of Data Collection

The researcher visited the principals in their schools and distributed copies of the questionnaire. She allowed each principal visited some minutes to respond to the items before retrieving the filled questionnaire. Repeat visits were made to retrieve the copies where the researcher was unable to retrieve on the days they were administered. At the end of the exercise all the distributed questionnaires were collected back and used for statistical analyses.

Method of Data Analysis

Mean and standard deviation scores were used in answering the research questions. The options were given the following points:

Strongly agree	***	***	4 points
Agree	***	***	3 points
Disagree	***	***	2 points
Strongly disagree	***	***	1 points

The decision rule was that items which obtained mean scores of 2.50 and above would be regarded as agreement with the statement (A), while those that obtained mean scores below 2.50 would be regarded as disagreement (DA). In addition, items with standard deviations of less than 1.00 were regarded as being close to the mean scores, while those items with standard deviations above 1.00 were regarded as being at large variance with the mean scores.

Data Analysis and Presentation of Results

Research Question 1

How do principals implement the control policies issued by ANSEC on student's admission in Anambra State?

Table 1

Summary of Mean Ratings of Principals' Implementation of the Control Policies Issued by ANSEC on Student's Admission in Anambra State

	How do principals admit students in their schools? Principals;	X	SD	Decision rule
1	Admit students at any time in the academic session	2.49	0.70	Disagree
2.	Admit only students with transfer certificates	3.56	0.88	Agree
3.	Carry out inter-state admissions in their schools	2.34	0.56	disagree
4.	Admit students from private to public schools	1.88	0.50	Disagree
5.	Admit only students approved by the ANSEC	2.85	0.71	Agree
6.	Admit students not minding the population of the schools	2.20	0.66	Disagree
7	Reject students sent from the ANSEC once school population is very high	2.96	0.76	Agree
8	Reject students approved by the ANSEC who do not meet their admission requirements in academic performance	3.22	0.72	Agree
9	Conduct in-school interviews - before admitting students	3.59 -----	0.80	Agree

From the analysis in table 1, it is observed that the mean scores for items I, 4, and 6 were 2.49, 1.88 and 2.20 respectively. This shows that the principals did not perform the actions listed in those items during students' admissions. The remaining 5 items had mean scores between 2.85 to 3.58. These mean scores exceed the acceptable mean of 2.50 thereby showing that the principals perform the actions in the items while admitting students. Also the low standard deviations for the all the items are indicative of the convergence of the opinions of principals on the admission activities in the schools.

Research Question 2

What actions do principals take to implement the control policies on fund raising? In answering this research question, the fund raising activities of the principals were investigated using mean scores and standard deviation. An asterisks (*) sign in an item indicates that the activity performed was not in line with the control policy on fund raising.

Table 2

Summary of mean Ratings of Principals' Implementation of the Control Policies Issued by

ANSEC on fund Raising in Anambra State

	How do principals raise funds in their schools? Principals:	X	SD	Decision Rule
10	Collect only levies approved by the ANSEC.	3.58	1.12	Agree
11	Liase with the PTA and Raise fund for school projects	3.56	1.11	Agree
12	Sometimes collect levies without approval from the ANSEC	3.52	1.07	Agree*
13	Hire out school premises for use by community members	3.88	0.99	Agree*
14	Organise launch ings without ., approval from the ANSEC	2.85	0.92	Agree*
15	Obtain approval from the ANSEC to organise fund raisi activities such as graduation.	3.40	0.86	Agree
16	Sell manuals, books other materials provided free by the government to students to make additional money for school projects	2.96	0.91	Agree *
17	Visit book publishers, cooperate bodies to raise funds for their schools.	2.68	0.82	Agree
18	Sanction teachers that collect illegal levies from students	3.07	0.96	Agree

In table 2, it is observed that all the items generally scored above the acceptable mean. Also all the items had low standard deviations, indicating low levels of variability in the mean scores. These show that the principals carry out the activities listed to raise funds for their schools. However, items 12, 13, and 16 were not in line with the control policy on fund raising. Therefore, for the principals to carry out those activities show that they fail to implement the policies listed in the items.

Research Question 3

How do the principals implement the control policy directives regarding the engagement of part time teachers?

In answering this research question, the activities of the principals in terms of part time engagement of teachers were investigated using mean scores and standard deviation. An asterisks (*) sign in an item indicates that the activity performed was not in line with the control policy on part time engagement. Table 4 presents the summary for data analysis.

Table 3

Summary of Mean Ratings of Principals' Implementation of the Control Policies Issued by ANSEC on Part-time Engagement in Anambra State

	What actions do principals take regarding part-time engagement of teachers in schools? Principals:	X	SD	Decision Rule
19	Recruit only part-time teachers with relevant qualifications	2.58	0.90	Agree*
20	Advertise for vacancies before recruiting part-time teachers-	2.77	0.91	Agree*
	Recruit part time teachers through the PTA	3.12	0.77	Agree*
	Engage in part-time teaching in other institutions or tutorial colleges themselves	2.66	0.92	Agree*
23	Do not allow their teachers to engage in part-time teaching in other institutions or tutorial colleges	2.30	0.92	Agree*
24	Seek approval from the ANSEC to recruit part-time teachers	1.84	0.11	Disagree
25	Sanction teachers that engage in part-time teaching	2.33	0.90	Disagree *

In table 3, it is observed that only items 24 and 25 scored below the acceptable mean of 2.50. This shows that the principals do not carry out the activities listed. The remaining items scored above 2.50 indicating that the teachers engaged in those activities. All the items have low standard deviations, indicating that the mean scores of the principals are close to one another. Further more, only item 24 had no asterisk on it. The other items all had asterisks mark indicating that they were not in line with the control policy on part-time engagement of teachers. Therefore, for the principals to carry out those activities in items 19 to 23, while they fail to carry out the activity in item 24 and 25 show that they fail to implement the policies implied in those items on engagement of part-time teachers.

Discussions

- Findings are discussed under the following sub-headings. 1) Implementation of policies on students' admission 2).
- Implementation of fund raising policies. 3) Implementation of the policy on engagement of part-time teachers,

Implementation of Policies on Students' Admission

The responses of the principals as shown in table 2 indicate that they implement the policies listed in the questionnaire items to a large extent This finding shows that the principals implement the control policy on students admission by admitting only students with transfer certificates approved by ANSEC with due regard to school population and academic performances of student. They also conduct in-school interviews before such admission. This finding agrees with the control policy on admission issued by the Anambra State Education Commission in May 2000 Ref. No ANSEC/ SCH/258/VOL. vi). This finding is good because Afigbo (1986) pointed out that plans or objectives remain mere wishes until they are implemented. Ikediugwu (1990) also found that principals implement control policies on admissions effectively. Implementation of control policy on fund raising

In table 2, it was observed that .in response to research question two, principals indicate that they sometimes collect levies, hire out school premises to community members and organize launchings without approval from ANSEC. By implication, these activities were against the control

policy on fund raising. The policy on fund raising reference No. SEC/GP/AD/104/85 stated that all fund raising activities must be approved by ANSEC and all un-approved levies are illegal. The principals however implement the policy on fund raising by raising fund through the PTA, visiting book publishers and corporate bodies for assistance and sanctioning teachers that collect illegal levies from students. These activities are encouraging and confirm an earlier finding by Osuji (2002) that principals make some efforts to raise fund within the limits imposed by the secondary education management boards.

Implementation of the Control Policy on Part-time Engagement of Teachers

For research question three, the extent of the implementation of the control policy on part-time engagement of teachers was investigated. The control policy on part-time engagement reference No ANSEC/GP/AD/04/102, banned principals from appointing part time teachers or engaging in part-time teaching under any circumstance. It also banned teachers from engaging in part-time engagements. However, responses in table 3 show that principals engage part-time teachers and engage in part-time activities themselves. Although the part-time teachers are mostly recruited through the PTA, it is against the policy stipulation on part-time engagement. The reason for principals' engagement of part-time teachers may be to fill in gaps existing in several school subjects as a result of lack of enough teachers. Eya (2002) found that in most secondary schools in Nigeria, specialist teachers are lacking. Under such circumstance, the PTA members, desirous to provide their children with qualitative teachers may compel principals to recruit part-time teachers or do the recruitment by themselves,

The finding that principals themselves engage in part-time teaching is not surprising. The financial situation in Nigeria today force many principals and teachers to pick part-time engagements to supplement their salaries. More so, the prevalence of tutorial colleges that prepares student for JAMB, WAEC, and other external examinations, create part-time opportunities for teachers. Idima (2004) found out that many principals own tutorial colleges, making it difficult for them to conform to the policy directives on engagement in part-time activities.

Implications of the Findings for Repositioning Secondary Education

The implications of these findings for repositioning secondary education are numerous. In the first place, the finding that principals in urban schools implement the control policy on students' admissions more than rural principals imply that the implementation of the policy on students' admission is difficult for rural principals considering the exodus of students from rural to urban schools. Therefore, unless the Anambra State Education Commission Management regulates admission of students and insists on non-transfer of students posted to rural areas, the trend is likely to continue in the future thereby frustrating efforts at repositioning secondary education in the State.

Secondly, principals fail to implement the policy on fund raising. This implies that many principals and teachers still engage in authorized and illegal levying of students. A further implication is that issues in free education or free provision of resources by government cannot be a reality unless illegal fund raising is checked in both urban and rural schools.

Thirdly, the principals fail to implement the control policy on engagement in part-time teaching. The implication of this is that teachers engage in and are likely to continue engaging in part-time teaching probably to supplement their income. This further implies that unless teachers are promptly and handsomely paid, they will continue to engage in part-time teaching. A further implication is that there is dearth of teachers in urban and rural schools thus compelling the PTA members to recruit part-time teachers. This trend is likely to continue in the future because parents want qualitative education f

Recommendations

Based the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- 1) The State Education Commission should regularly monitor school administrative activities to ensure that principals implement control policies as stipulated.
- 2) The State Education Commission should allow principals to source funds from a variety of sources to execute school projects but the issue of illegal levying should be stopped. Defaulters should receive serious disciplinary actions.

- 3) The PTA members should liaise with principals to raise funds but should always report cases of illegal levying to the ANSEC.
- 4) Admission of students from rural to urban schools is presenting a serious problem to the survival of rural schools. The ANSEC should therefore formulate further policies to restrict such admission. This will make it easier for principals in rural schools to implement the policy on admissions more effectively.
- 5) Government should recruit more teachers and post them to schools where there are demands for such teachers. This will help in the implementation of the policy on part time teaching.
- 6) Funds, resources and facilities should be provided to help principals implement educational policies better.

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that principals do not satisfactorily implement the control policies of the Anambra State Education Commission especially as it concerns fund raising, engagement of part-time teachers, and in-service education as stipulated. Since the repositioning of secondary education requires effective policy implementation, it is important that efforts be made by ANSEC to ensure that principals implement these policies.

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